



New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

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SUBJECT: Admission of Tuition and State Facility Education Act (SFEA) Students to Department of Children and Families (DCF) Regional Schools

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 2, 1999

REVISED: April 29, 2008

A. **OBJECTIVE**

To ensure consistent and appropriate admission practices for tuition and SFEA students at DCF Regional Schools.

B. **DEFINITION**

A "Traditional Tuition Student" is a student with severe disabilities who is referred to a DCF Regional School by the school district that will be responsible for his/her tuition and the provision of child study team services. This type of tuition student has traditionally attended a Regional School and would formerly have been known as an eligible for day training student.

C. **STANDARDS**

Students admitted to a DCF Regional School shall meet the appropriate eligibility requirements stipulated in this policy.

The admission of students to a DCF Regional School shall be a collaborative process involving the appropriate persons as outlined in this policy for each type of student population.

During the admission process, the appropriate forms and letters provided in this policy for each category of student shall be consistently utilized.

Admission of SFEA students shall not be delayed and shall be accomplished, to the maximum extent possible, within 72 hours of notification of admission to a residential program or acceptance by a Regional School, as appropriate.

Students who move within a catchment area or within the State shall remain eligible to attend DCF Regional Schools where feasible.

The TIENET database shall be maintained up-to-date for all students attending DCF Regional Schools, including the use of the messaging system for communication concerning the enrollment of tuition students.

D. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

1. SFEA students shall be admitted on the basis of their placement in a State Facility program or on a referral/intake/selection process as outlined in this policy.
2. For those students referred to a DCF Regional School, acceptance shall be based on the school's ability to deliver the services specified in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) of a student with a disability or provide an appropriate program based on the review of a general education student's records.
3. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:17-3, general education students between the ages of five through 20 years and students with disabilities ages three through 21 years are eligible for educational programs and services.
4. Students are not eligible for programs and services if they have obtained a high school diploma or are enrolled in a General Educational Development or adult education program.
5. Students shall have the required immunizations in accordance with N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.1 et seq.:
 - a. Any of the following documentation may be accepted as evidence of immunizations:
 - 1) An official school record from any school, preschool or child care center indicating compliance with Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) regulations;
 - 2) A record from any public health department indicating DHSS compliance;

- 3) A certificate signed by a physician licensed to practice medicine or osteopathy or an advanced practice nurse (certified registered nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist); or
 - 4) The official record from the New Jersey Immunization Information System indicating compliance with DHSS requirements.
- b. A child shall be admitted to school on a provisional basis, in accordance with the requirements specified in N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.5, if a physician, an advanced practice nurse or health department can document that at least one dose of each required age-appropriate vaccine(s) or antigen(s) has been administered and that the student is in the process of receiving the remaining immunization(s).
 - c. The Education Supervisor (ES) or designee shall contact the Administrative Practice Officer (APO) at the OOE if a parent seeks an exemption from immunization requirements for a student or infant due to medical or religious reasons.

E. ADMISSION FOR TRADITIONAL TUITION STUDENTS

1. When a school district is interested in referring a traditional tuition student to a DCF Regional School, the Education Supervisor (ES) shall request the student's IEP, child study team assessments, physical health records and record of immunization from the sending district, utilizing the **Letter found at Attachment 3**:
2. The ES shall establish a meeting with the student, family, district representative, school's nurse, and others as necessary to review pertinent issues and complete necessary documentation which include, but are not limited to:
 - a. the **Health Information Form (Attachment 1)**, which is completed by the nurse with the participation of the parent/guardian;
 - b. the **Student/Infant Contact Information Form (Attachment 2)** which is completed by the student's parent/ guardian/residential provider;
 - 1) When the school receives the completed form, the ES or other authorized staff person shall call the individuals, listed on the form as emergency contacts, to verify the telephone numbers and each person's willingness to take responsibility for the student in the absence of the parent/guardian/residential provider.
 - 2) The Form shall be updated at least annually or more frequently, as needed.
 - c. wheelchair, seating equipment and transportation concerns for non-ambulatory students;

- d. prescription medications;
 - e. the physical therapy prescription; and
 - f. if indicated, based on the proceedings of the meeting provide the district representative with the **“Application for Enrollment of Traditional Tuition Students” (Attachment 4)**.
3. If, at any point in the process, the student is not recommended for admission, the ES shall notify the district and return the student records, utilizing the **Letter found at Attachment 5**.
 4. If the ES, school’s nurse and other members of the school staff, as appropriate, make a preliminary determination that the program can meet the student’s educational needs, the ES shall:
 - a. forward the “Application for Enrollment of Traditional Tuition Students” (Attachment 4) to the sending district if not previously provided;
 - b. confer with the Nursing Supervisor and Regional Administrator (RA) to review the status of the student; and
 - c. request the family to schedule the student for a physical examination by a licensed health-care provider who shall complete the **“Admission Medical Examination Form” (Attachment 6)** which shall be forwarded to the Regional School prior to admission.
 5. The ES, Nursing Supervisor and Regional Administrator shall complete the appropriate sections of the **“Traditional Tuition Students Application Tracking Form” (Attachment 7)**.
 6. If the ES, Nursing Supervisor and RA have approved the student for admission and all necessary documentation has been received, the ES shall establish a start date with the Regional School’s Head Driver, the sending district and the student’s parent/guardian and shall notify other appropriate individuals, as needed.
 7. Other forms, such as a “preliminary acceptance letter” generated by the Regional School for districts requiring this documentation may be developed and utilized after approval by the appropriate RA.
 8. The ES or the RA shall forward both the “Application” and the “Tracking Form” to the OOE fiscal person indicated on the Form.

9. The OOE shall send a letter of official acceptance and a tuition contract agreement, signed by the Director, to the district of residence.
10. The ES shall send the **Letter found at Attachment 8** to the referring person from the student's sending district. This letter contains required notification language and requests additional mandated student records.
11. At the time of admission, the ES or designee shall complete the applicable sections of TIENET and notify the appropriate fiscal staff at the OOE via a TIENET e-mail that a new tuition student has been admitted.

F. ADMISSION FOR DISTRICT-REFERRED TRANSITIONAL EDUCATION CENTER (TEC) AND TEEN EDUCATION AND CHILD HEALTH (TEACH) TUITION STUDENTS

1. Admission of a TEACH student shall be contingent on the availability of space in the nursery for the infant or the *expected* infant, based on the due-date. Any exceptions to this criterion shall be approved by the appropriate Regional Administrator.
2. The application process for admission to a DCF Regional School for TEC and TEACH students referred by a school district shall initially include the completion of the **"Application for Enrollment for District-Referred Students" (Attachment 9)** by the student's sending district. The Educational Supervisor (ES) shall provide the form to the district and review it for completeness upon its return.
3. Upon review of the "Application for Enrollment for District-Referred Students" form, the ES and other Regional School staff, as appropriate, shall make a determination of whether to consider the student for possible admission.
4. For students who are not appropriate or eligible for admission based on the information provided in the Application, the ES shall send the **Letter found at Attachment 10** to the district.
5. For students who may potentially be eligible for admission, the ES shall utilize the **Letter found at Attachment 11** to request that the sending district:
 - a. forward copies of the student records;
 - b. contact the parent/guardian/adult student to establish a date for an intake interview; and

- c. ensure that the parent/guardian/adult student completes the **Health Information Form (Attachment 1)** and the **Student/Infant Contact Information Form (Attachment 2)** and brings them to the intake interview meeting.
- 6. The ES and other school staff, as appropriate, shall review the student records and conduct the interview with the student and his/her parent/guardian and district representative, when present.
 - a. The school's nurse shall review the **Health Information Form (Attachment 1)** with the parent/guardian/adult student, amending the information as warranted.
 - b. The **Student/Infant Contact Information Form (Attachment 2)** shall be completed with the parent/guardian/adult student if not previously done.
 - 1) The ES or other authorized staff person shall call the individuals, listed on the form as emergency contacts, to verify the telephone numbers and each person's willingness to take responsibility for the student in the absence of the parent/guardian.
 - 2) The Form shall be updated at least annually or more frequently, as needed.
- 7. If, after the intake interview, or at any point in the remaining process, the student is not recommended for admission, the ES shall send the **Letter found at Attachment 12** to the district, thereby informing them and returning the student records.
- 8. The ES and the RA shall complete the appropriate sections of the **"TEACH and TEC Tuition Students Application Tracking Form" (Attachment 13)**.
- 9. If the student is approved for admission:
 - a. The ES shall contact the sending district to determine a start date;
 - b. The RA or ES shall forward the Application and the Tracking Form to the OOE fiscal person indicated on the Tracking Form;
 - c. The OOE shall send a letter of official acceptance and a tuition contract agreement, signed by the Director, to the district of residence; and
 - d. The ES shall send the **Letter found at Attachment 14** to the referring person from the student's sending district. This letter contains required notification language and requests additional mandated student records.

10. At the time of admission, the ES or designee shall complete the applicable sections of TIENET and notify the appropriate fiscal staff at the OOE via a TIENET e-mail that a new tuition student has been admitted.

G. ADMISSION FOR SFEA TEC AND TEACH STUDENTS

1. In order to be an SFEA eligible TEC or TEACH student, the student must be referred by a Court/Probation Department or be referred by/receiving services from a designated State agency.
2. Admission of a TEACH student shall be contingent on the availability of space in the nursery for the infant or the *expected* infant, based on the due date. Any exceptions to this criterion shall be approved by the appropriate Regional Administrator.
3. For students who are referred to a Regional School who would potentially be appropriate for a TEC or TEACH program, the ES shall obtain documentation, from the referring court/Probation Department or the identified State agency, which indicates the student's involvement with that entity.
 - a. If there is no documentation reflecting the student's referral from a State agency, the ES shall ascertain if the student has a case manager employed by a State agency.
 - b. In instances where it is unknown if a student is receiving services from a designated State agency, the ES shall contact the responsible person at the OOE for further investigation of the student's status.
 - c. The OOE shall contact the applicable State agency to determine if the student is currently receiving services and shall notify the ES in writing of the status of the student.
4. For all referred students, the ES shall maintain an on-going log to document the evidence that confirms SFEA eligibility or non- eligibility which includes:
 - a. a referral from a Judge or Probation officer;
 - b. a referral from a State agency worker/case manager;
 - c. a telephone call verifying the name of the assigned State agency worker/case manager; and/or
 - d. written evidence provided by the OOE.

5. If a student is not SFEA eligible, the ES shall contact the student's district to inform them about the student's referral to the program and the district's ability to apply to the school for the student's possible enrollment as a tuition student. When a district expresses an interest in referring the student, the ES shall follow the admission process outlined in section E of this policy.
6. For SFEA eligible students, the ES shall utilize the **Letter found at Attachment 15** to request pertinent student education records such as transcripts, assessment results, health/immunization records, and if applicable, the IEP and child study team reports from the district of residence.
7. The ES and appropriate school staff shall review the student records when received and conduct an intake process which includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. The ES or designee and selected school staff shall interview the prospective student and his/her parent/guardian.
 - b. The **Health Information Form (Attachment 1)** shall be completed collaboratively by the school's nurse and the parent/guardian/adult student in person or by telephone.
 - c. The **Student/Infant Contact Information Form (Attachment 2)** shall be completed by the parent/guardian/adult student with the assistance of school staff as needed.
 - 1) The ES or other authorized staff person shall call the individuals, listed on the form as emergency contacts, to verify the telephone numbers and each person's willingness to take responsibility for the student in the absence of the parent/guardian.
 - 2) The Form shall be updated at least annually or more frequently, as needed.
 - d. The ES and staff shall determine if the student meets the criteria for making a commitment to programming and whether the Regional School can meet the needs of the student.
8. The ES shall inform the referring agency, the parent/guardian/adult student and the district of residence of the decision to accept or not accept the student.
 - a. The educational records for students who are not accepted shall be returned to the district of residence utilizing the **Letter found at Attachment 16**.

- b. The ES shall notify the district of students who are accepted and request the additional student education records utilizing the **Letter found at Attachment 17**.
- 9. As soon as a student has been accepted for admission and transportation for the student has been established, the ES shall notify the parent/guardian/adult student and the school district of the student's start date. To the maximum extent possible, the student shall begin attending school within 72 hours of the notification of acceptance.
- 10. The ES or designee shall complete the TIENET database for all new students admitted including the selection of "SFEA" under the "Determination" field on the Demographics/ Enrollment page.

H. ADMISSION FOR SFEA RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS IN REGIONAL SCHOOLS

- 1. The admission of an SFEA residential student to a Regional School is dictated by the student's placement in a State Facility program.
 - a. The Regional School designated as the education program for that State Facility shall admit the student according to the procedures in the Supervisor of Education/Child Study Team Manual (SE/CST Manual).
 - b. The ES or designee shall request the student's education records from the district of residence, based on information provided by the residential program.
 - c. Placement of an SFEA residential student in the Regional School shall not be delayed for any reason, including a district's failure to forward requested student records in a timely manner.
 - d. The student shall begin attending school within 72 hours of admission to the residential program. The ES shall:
 - 1) document any barriers preventing the student's admission to school within the specified time frame; and
 - 2) develop a targeted plan of correction
- 2. The ES shall ensure that the **Health Information Form (Attachment 1)** and the **Student/Infant Contact Information Form (Attachment 2)** are completed as soon as possible by the residential provider, with the participation of the parent/guardian when feasible. The school's nurse shall follow up, as needed, to obtain additional health information.

I. CONTINUATION OF DISCHARGED SFEA RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS AS TUITION STUDENTS

1. When a student will be discharged from a residential program and moving to home or another community-based living arrangement within the catchment area of the Regional School, the Education Supervisor/Principal, the child study team case manager, and other appropriate persons, such as a DCBHS or DYFS case manager or a representative from the residence, shall discuss and consider the following factors to determine if a temporary continuation at the Regional School is indicated:
 - a. Transportation distance from the discharge placement to the Regional School;
 - b. Programmatic/academic issues;
 - c. Length of stay as a continuation student; and
 - d. Availability of space in the Regional School.
2. The ES for State-operated education programs or the child study team (CST) case manager for contracted education programs shall:
 - a. In order to gain preliminary approval, discuss the proposed details with the appropriate RA for State-operated education programs or the appropriate CST Regional Manager and RA for contracted programs; and
 - b. Contact the student's district of residence to discuss
 - 1) The district's responsibility for transportation, child study team services, and the "at-risk" tuition rate; and
 - 2) The timeframes for the temporary continuation.
3. If the school district verbally agrees to the temporary continuation of the student, the ES or CST case manager, as appropriate, shall complete the **"Request for Continuation of Discharged Residential Student as a Tuition Student" form (Attachment 18)**, which includes the approval of the RA for State-operated programs and the CST Regional Manager and the RA for contracted programs, and shall forward it to the applicable staff.
4. The TIENET program shall be updated by the ES or CST case manager as per the following:
 - a. On the Demographics/Enrollment page:
 - 1) Enter the exit date as an SFEA student from the residential program;

- 2) Change the "Residence Facility" field to the "day student" status for that student;
 - 3) Change the "Determination" field from "SFEA" to "blank;" and
 - 4) Print and retain a copy of this page in the student record.
- b. On the "Latest Evaluation/Placement" page:
 - 1) Enter the District of Residence;
 - 2) Enter the start date as a tuition day student; and
 - 3) Enter the anticipated end date of enrollment, if known, in the "Received Information" field.
 - c. Complete other sections of TIENET as needed for any other changes such as the removal of the OOE Child Study Team case manager.
5. The ES or CST case manager, as appropriate, shall notify the appropriate fiscal person at the OOE via a TIENET e-mail message of the student continuation.
 6. The OOE shall send a letter of official acceptance and a tuition contract agreement, signed by the Director, to the district of residence.
 7. The RA shall monitor the length of time each continuation student remains at either a State-operated or contracted Regional School and shall facilitate the transition of the student back to his/her school district.
 8. Any approval for extending the continuation of a student beyond the original projected timeframe shall be made by the RA and the CST Regional Manager, as appropriate.

J. CHANGE OF DISTRICT FOR TUITION STUDENTS

1. When a tuition day student (Traditional, TEC or TEACH) will be moving to a new school district which is within the catchment area of the DCF Regional School the student is currently attending, the ES or designee shall ascertain whether or not the student's enrollment in the DCF Regional School will be continued by the new school district. If so, the ES or designee shall:
 - a. Discuss details and timeframes with the appropriate RA;
 - b. Confirm with the new school district that the student has been registered by the parent/guardian and that the district requests to continue the student in the Regional School;

- c. Forward the “**Application for Enrollment for District Referred Students**” (**Attachment 4 or 9**, as appropriate for the student) to the school district;
 - d. Receive the “Application for Enrollment for District Referred Students” from the district;
 - e. Ensure the completion of the “**Tracking Form**” (**Attachment 7 or 13**, as applicable); and
 - f. The RA or ES shall forward the Application for Enrollment and the Tracking Form to the OOE staff member indicated on the Tracking Form.
2. On the TIENET program, the ES or designee shall:
- a. Enter the name of the new district of residence and the new address of the parent/guardian on the Demographics/ Enrollment page;
 - b. Enter the exit date as of the last date of enrollment pertaining to the previous district of residence, enter the new start date as of the first date of attendance pertaining to the new district of residence and the anticipated end date of enrollment, if known, in the “Received Information” field on the “Latest Evaluation/Placement” page; and
 - c. Complete other applicable sections of TIENET with any new data for the student such as parent name, address, district contacts and district of residence information.
3. The OOE shall send a letter of official acceptance and a tuition contract agreement, signed by the Director, to the district of residence.
4. The ES or designee shall notify the appropriate fiscal staff at the OOE via a TIENET e-mail message that these changes have been made.

K. TRANSFER OF TUITION STUDENTS

- 1. When it is known that a student will be moving within state to a new school district outside the catchment area of the current DCF Regional School, the ES or designee shall:
 - a. Determine if the Regional School in the county where the family will reside has a program (i.e. Traditional, TEC, TEACH) that may be appropriate for that student by discussing details with the Education Supervisor at that school;

- b. Notify the Nursing Supervisor at the OOE for Traditional students; and
 - c. If the potential placement is viable, provide information to the parent/guardian regarding the location of the Regional School.
- 2. If the student's new school district seeks to place the student in the DCF Regional School, the ES shall refer to the applicable procedures in Section D, E, or F, as appropriate.
- 3. The ES or designee at the DCF Regional School where the student is exiting shall complete the date of discharge from the education provider on the Demographics/Enrollment page and the date of discharge in the Received Information section on the Latest Evaluation/Placement page of the TIENET program.
- 4. When a student is accepted into another DCF Regional School:
 - a. The ES or designee at the DCF Regional School where the student is being admitted shall complete the appropriate sections on the TIENET program for student enrollment.
 - b. The ES or designee shall notify the appropriate fiscal staff at the OOE via a TIENET e-mail message of the student transfer.
 - c. The OOE shall send a letter of official acceptance and a tuition contract agreement, signed by the Director, to the district of residence.

L. TERMINATION OF TUITION STUDENTS

- 1. If the Regional School is considering termination of a tuition student with a disability prior to the end of the student's academic year, the ES shall immediately contact the student's district of residence and provide details of the proposed action.
 - a. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-7.7(a), the district of residence shall convene an IEP meeting within ten days of the notification. Staff from the Regional School, including the person(s) who recommended the potential termination, shall discuss the student's status and progress in the program in the context of the IEP meeting.
 - b. The IEP team shall review the current IEP and determine the student's new placement. Written notice of any changes to the IEP and the new placement shall be provided within ten days of the IEP meeting, by the district of residence.

- c. The student may be terminated from the Regional School after the district of residence has provided written notice to the parent/guardian.
2. If the Regional School is considering termination of a tuition general education student at any time during the student's academic year, the ES shall immediately contact the district of residence, the parent/guardian and applicable school staff to convene a meeting as soon as possible to discuss the student's status and progress in relation to the criteria of the program.
 - a. If a decision is made to terminate the student, the ES and participants in the meeting shall discuss alternate placement options.
 - b. The ES shall provide written notice of the discharge to the parent and district of residence prior to termination.
 - c. As feasible, the Regional School shall help to ensure that the student experiences a smooth transition to the next educational placement made by the student's district of residence.
3. When any student is discharged, the ES shall return the student records to the district of residence, in accordance with the procedures in the SE/CST Manual. A student's discharge (exit) date is the day after the student's last day in the program.
4. The ES or designee shall complete the date of discharge from the education provider on the Demographics/Enrollment page and the date of discharge in the Received Information section on the Latest Evaluation/Placement page of the TIENET program whenever a student leaves a DCF Regional School.
5. The ES shall notify the appropriate fiscal staff at the OOE via a TIENET e-mail message of the student discharge.

M. TERMINATION OF SFEA TEC AND TEACH STUDENTS

1. If the Regional School is considering termination of an SFEA student with or without disabilities for reasons of ongoing defiance of the school's rules, serious attendance issues, violation of a law or disruption of the educational process, the ES shall immediately contact the student's district of residence and provide details of the proposed action.
2. The ES shall convene a meeting within 10 school days with the district of residence, the parent/guardian and other persons as appropriate, such as a probation officer, assigned State case worker, the student and members of the Regional School to resolve the issues and attempt to continue the student in the current program.

3. In instances where continuation in the Regional School is not feasible, or at subsequent meetings involving student attendance or behavioral issues where it is demonstrated that continuation is not feasible, the individuals at the meeting shall discuss and arrange for the student's return to his/her district of residence for educational programming.
4. The ES or designee shall update the TIENET program as needed for discharged SFEA TEC and TEACH students.

Debra Stewart
Director
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Attachments:

[Attachment 1: Health Information Form](#)
[Attachment 2: Student/Infant Contact Information Form](#)
[Attachment 3: Request Records: Traditional Student](#)
[Attachment 4: Application Enrollment of Traditional Tuition Students](#)
[Attachment 5: Unable to Accept Traditional Student](#)
[Attachment 6: Admission Medical Examination Form](#)
[Attachment 7: Application Tracking Form: Traditional Student](#)
[Attachment 8: Request Records-Schedule IEP: Traditional Student](#)
[Attachment 9: Application for Enrollment: TEACH/TEC Student](#)
[Attachment 10: Unable to Accept-Based on Application: TEACH/TEC](#)
[Attachment 11: Preliminary Interview and Request Records:TEACH/TEC](#)
[Attachment 12: Unable to Accept-Return Records: TEACH/TEC](#)
[Attachment 13: Application Tracking Form: TEACH/TEC Student](#)
[Attachment 14: Acceptance TEACH/TEC Student Request Additional Records](#)
[Attachment 15: Request Records: SFEA Student](#)
[Attachment 16: Unable to Accept: SFEA Student](#)
[Attachment 17: SFEA Student Acceptance and Request Additional Records](#)
[Attachment 18: Continuation of Discharged Resident Student as Tuition Student](#)